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FACT SHEET

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Jury Data Project

The Jury Data Project works to standardize, collect, and analyze fundamental measures of jury operations in the trial courts and to provide this information to court administrators, the public, legislators, and the Judicial Council. By gathering consistent and timely data for each court, the Jury Data Project supports the ongoing evaluation and improvement of the jury management system at both the local and state levels.

Study Purpose and Background

In 2002 Office of Court Research (OCR) staff worked with the AOC Jury Improvement Program and jury managers throughout the state to identify and standardize the basic data elements necessary to monitor jury operations and to facilitate the transfer of this data to the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC).

Since calendar year 2005, OCR staff have collected 30 data elements from jury managers in all superior courts, including information on:

- Summonsing, excusals, and postponements;
- Jury service completion and one day or one trial; and
- The number of panels, pools, and jurors sworn.

By working with jury system vendors and jury managers to standardize and compile this data, the Jury Data Project will provide an array of operational measures that will assist court administrators in managing their operations, improve trial court performance, and serve as measures of accountability for jury operations.

Developing Performance Measures

The development of standardized jury data across all courts will allow the state judiciary to evaluate jury operations using national jury management standards and measurements tools such as the National Center for State Courts' CourTools. The CourTools use data from the Jury Data Project to create relative measures of California jury performance such as:

- **Jury yield.** This is the number of citizens selected for jury duty who are qualified and report to serve, expressed as a percentage of the total number of prospective jurors available. The percentage of citizens available to serve on a jury relates to the integrity of source lists, the effectiveness of jury management practices, the willingness of citizens to serve, the efficacy of excuse and postponement policies, and the number of exemptions allowed.
- **Jury utilization.** This is the rate at which prospective jurors are used at least once in trial or voir dire, expressed as the number of jurors selected as a percentage of prospective jurors qualified and available to serve. The objective of this measure is to minimize the number of unused prospective jurors—the number of citizens who are summoned, qualified, report for jury service, but are not needed.

Next Steps

The Jury Data Project is currently developing standard reports to communicate jury management data to a wider audience. In addition, OCR staff are working closely with jury software vendors to improve data quality, minimize the workload associated with collecting this data, and expand the data elements gathered as the needs of the Judicial Council, trial courts, and AOC change. In terms of performance measurement, the Office of Court Research will continue to work on identifying areas of jury management that can be used as a relative measure of well-managed jury operations.

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Additional Resources:

www.ncsconline.org/D_Research/CourTools/Images/courtools_measure8.pdf